776 754 The same "methods" are ascribed to Falasha ironsmiths who live in their own hamlets in the Amhara regions. The Falasha, who are regarded as having some secret "education" of their own (actually Mosaic Judaism), are believed to be able to turn a victim into a donkey and make him do a donkey's work, then turn him back to a human in their own hamlet, and make him do a servant's work. In case rescue nears, the Falashas are believed to be able to turn him into one of the many large pots that always lie about a Falasha hamlet where the women make pottery for sale.

Thus the buda complex contains many facets: medical-regional-ecological (Gojjam's Blue Nile is a major caravan route that can bring infectious diseases) - ethnic - religious - Middle Eastern evil eye complex - African fear of the ironsmith. All this is fitted into the Amhara cosmology of the supernatural.

Though closely interconnected in the Amhara mind, some of these facets will be considered in separate detail.

754 158 b. Symptoms of "buda" disease.

The classic symptoms of "buda" disease follow the following sequence. The victim, usually a young woman between the age of 15 and 30, complains of utter fatigue and a heavy head. An hour or so later, she breaks out in hysterical frenzy, wild laughter, stares with wild, empty eyes, moves about restlessly as if driven by some inner demon. An hour or so later, she complains of intestinal cramps, and cringes under the violence of the pain. Her fingers are clenched so that the thumbs are not visible - (regarded as sure sign of the "buda"). For, it is believed, her thumbs have been grasped by the buda that is eating her and he won't let anyone else see them lest his "food" be taken from him. This is called "tämäbbäzä", stolen by force, for the buda is robbing the victim

754 of her blood, her health, life itself. The eyes of the victim are
158 glazed, the nostrils distended, the face may wear a ghastly smile, and the body may be inflexible, or else in a nervous tremor. Relatives and "bread-companions" become terrified and run to the exorciser, often a dabtara, bringing him a gift called "ageba" (lit. entrance, i.e. visiting fee). By the time he arrives, the victim may be in contortions on the ground - being eaten by the buda. Some patients may try to hurt themselves, though others do not. When restrained, the patient may fight against the restraint, and women patients bite and scratch the restrainers.

Another classic case is total apathy, refusal to eat, and resistance even to the zar doctor, followed by sudden revival at night and the urge to run out and roam with the hyenas. Zar doctors explain this as a "zar being attached by a buda". An exorciser is then called in.

A common symptom of less violent character is nosebleed, which is very common. Persons vulnerable to this take care to [824] stuff smelly plants into the nose when on the trail. Such protective plants are collectively called "yabuda reyan" (smells against the buda).

[851] Boys, when hazing the children of an ironsmith or suspected sorcerer sometimes force garlic ("chequn") into the nose of the child with such force as to cause nosebleed, saying "now give up the blood you have stolen". Garlic is believed to have the power 754 824 to stop a buda and is therefore buried under the door of a suspected sorcerer, e.g. an itinerant smith travelling his circuit of customers; this is believed toprevent the buda from going out at night "to feed".

158 Sometimes cases of buda possession are brought in to the [159] government hospital at Gondar where two European physicians are in charge. They have diagnosed the shrieking, wildly beating type of case as "hysteria"; and the apathetic type of buda case as "catalepsy". In the latter case they have observed absence of reflex responses on eye and knee, almost no pulse, faint heart-beat, low blood pressure; sometimes a stupor in which the patient has no control over bowel movements and urinating. In severe cases of this kind there is a suspension of sensation and will, and muscles are so rigid that limbs keep any position they are placed in by the doctor.

755 In one memorable case, a hysteria patient, a man, had been gradually quieted by a Coptic Amhara priest called in by the European doctors at the hospital, who knew the effectiveness of this from past experience. All the priest had done was to hold the hand of the patient and quietly recite prayers in the Geez language, (which the lay patient could not understand). When the priest tired of this, the regular hospital priest was called in to continue this "treatment". But at sunrise the next morning the patient had disappeared out the window. The hospital "dressers" (male, semi-trained nurses) explained that the patient probably would go a long distance from this area, to escape the severe beating his kinfolk would give him - the "post-operative" treatment meted out to patients recovering from buda possession to "discourage the buda from returning".

755 In the rural areas the "tänqway" is still sometimes called
756 in to treat buda cases, though this is not his major specialty. He is what has been called a "witch-doctor", professional sorcerer, and diviner. He usually treats the patient by frightening the

157 absence of self-restraint, he can give free rein to the typical
554 Amhara fondness for rapid and noisy argumentation, quoting witticisms, puns and proverbs. He does not have to control his typical Amhara curiosity about non-material objects and human behavior, and can stare freely and openly. Even his servility to the noble is
[576] only formal and not internalized, for, while he bows deeply from the hips, his eyes are raised to observe every detail of the situation (especially to see whether some reward can be wheedled).

The Amhara noble, however, is required to be at least outwardly, an introverted personality. This is expressed in formal dignity, a partly withdrawn and meditative manner, a serious (though not severe) mien. His bodily movements must be slow and deliberate; his pattern of speech must be the same. Most of the time he remains pokerfaced. He has been trained to observe by moving only his eyes,
[152] not his head. He does not express his basic emotions directly, except with social equals under proper circumstances. He must appear too proud to show curiosity, even for interesting and strange articles brought by the foreigner; he accepts them with just a dignified and appreciative nod of the head.

152 There is the principle of "noblesse oblige". The noble be-
554 haves as if his due will certainly come to him - he does not have to go and seek it. When a servant has angered him, the noble does not fly into a rage publicly, though he may have him routinely flogged later on. It is noteworthy that even the womenfolk among the nobles share this personality training. Although hysteria is
152 very common among Amhara women, it is rare among noblewomen. Even
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● 157 in case of great emotional distress (e.g. if a child has died)
[304] when commoner Amhara women wail loudly, scarify themselves, and roll

152 554 158 on the ground, Amhara noblewomen weep silently or go into states of apathy. This is a more common mental ailment among nobles than hysteria, and may lead to chronic depression and even catalepsy (see Part VI).

157 554 186 However, both the peasant and the noble share certain common Amhara personality characteristics. Both take great pride in being able to "speak well in court". Homesickness is strong among both, and is very widespread. Kings and emperors, until very recently, had great difficulty in sending and keeping ambassadors abroad, for the diplomat regarded his foreign assignment as "exile". Both classes share great pride in their highland plateau, defended for many centuries against all comers. This national vanity is at least in part due to long ignorance of the world beyond (sometimes hardened into xenophobia); pride in their ancient religion and in the national epics like the Solomon-Sheba-Menelik. These are shared by Amhara of all classes.

829 Amhara concepts of government administration are aristocratic: ruled by the noble "great man", who is usually descended from a feudal warlord of past centuries. The military camp and its direct significance for traditional Amhara social structure and government has been described in Part III. At the top of the hierarchy is the king or emperor (King of Kings). At the Amhara grassroots is the peasant, who seeks justice by attaching himself to a "great man" as retainer, so that he too will be treated "with honor" by reflection. From the bottom to the top of the hierarchy of government, persons on every level perform the ceremony of "dãj tenat" (lit. waiting by the gate) to obtain jobs, maintain positions, or merely to prevent doubts about personal loyalty from arising through absence. This